

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 14, 2004

Dear Ocean and Coastal Education Partner:

On September 20, 2004, the United States Commission on Ocean Policy will release its Final Report and recommendations for a coordinated, comprehensive, and long-range national policy for the responsible use and stewardship of our ocean and coastal resources. Among other topics, the report will highlight ocean stewardship and the importance of education and public awareness, topics with which your organization is very familiar. The Commission's Preliminary Report, released on April 20, 2004, dedicated an entire chapter to the topic of stewardship and increasing public awareness, emphasizing the importance and necessity of these issues. In addition, the Preliminary Report called for increasing community awareness and participation in the conservation of our ocean and coastal resources, which President George W. Bush strongly supports.

To help in this effort, the White House Council on Environmental Quality and USA Freedom Corps, the President's volunteer initiative, are partnering to promote volunteer service in the Nation's coastal areas. The USA Freedom Corps is an office of the White House that seeks to expand volunteer opportunities at the Federal and local level and provide Americans with information about existing volunteer service opportunities. Working with the Network for Good and its partners, including VolunteerMatch, the USA Freedom Corps offers the largest online clearinghouse of volunteer opportunities ever created at www.usafreedomcorps.gov. Thousands of non-profit organizations list their volunteer opportunities on this network. We invite you to take advantage of this opportunity and help us promote community participation in conserving our ocean and coastal environments.

The Internet is providing a new and innovative avenue for organizations to find dedicated volunteers. Volunteer Match is one organization providing such services at no cost to organizations such as yours. By registering your organization's volunteer opportunities on the internet, you can promote volunteer service within your community and strengthen your organization. To learn more about how to list your volunteer opportunities, visit www.usafreedomcorps.gov. Information about VolunteerMatch is also enclosed. To those who may already be registered volunteer opportunities on the Internet, we encourage you to make sure your volunteer opportunities are up-to-date, and help make searching as easy as possible by clearly describing your ocean or coastal related volunteer activity.

Thank you for your contribution to the conservation of our oceans and coasts. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



James L. Connaughton
Chairman
White House Council on Environmental Quality



Desiree T. Sayle
Deputy Assistant to the President and Director
USA Freedom Corps